GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:404
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015
AAKASH TABLETS
Puttaraju Shri C.S.

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether components of the Aakash tablet are manufactured in China and it is merely assembled in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Aakash tablets cannot be counted as Indian innovation;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the corrective steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) & (b) Madam, under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT) scheme, a project on Low Cost Access-cum Computing Devices was sanctioned to IIT Rajasthan to achieve the following deliverables:
(i) The acquisition and testing of low cost access cum computing devices; and
(ii) The hardware & software optimization of low cost access cum computing devices.

These devices were launched on 5th October, 2011 and during the launch they were named as 'Aakash'. This project was subsequently transferred to IIT Bombay. The Aakash Tablet comprises of many hundreds of components sourced from around the world and it cannot be said that the components are manufactured solely in China.

(c) to (e) In such low cost devices, the key is not the hardware but the software that is made available on the device itself. The hardware merely provides a platform and the full value delivered by the Aakash device is a function of the applications available on it. Keeping in mind that the Aakash tablet is meant for educational purposes, the IIT Bombay has already developed and deployed quite a few educational applications on it. IIT Bombay has completed the project.